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TEN YEARS LATER: MARIEL CUBANS TODAY

It has been ten years since the Mariel boatlift of 1980. Between April 21 and September 29 of that year, 125,266 Cubans arrived in Key West, Florida, the vast majority of whom settled in the Miami area.

"Marielitos", as the Cubans who arrived on the Mariel boatlift were termed, became a stigmatized population even while the boatlift was still in progress. Rumors that a high percentage of those arriving were mentally ill, criminals, or prostitutes put on the boats by Fidel Castro spread consternation, even panic, in Miami--and not only in the "Anglo" community. Although the new arrivals included many friends and relatives, there was also fear within Miami's established Cuban refugee community that the Mariel Cubans were different, that they would somehow undermine what earlier Cubans saw as their success story.

Although the rumors were not totally unfounded, they were grossly exaggerated. The Cuban government did indeed offer a number of prison inmates the choice of either leaving the country or remaining in jail with a two-year extension added onto their sentences. Those who agreed to leave were taken to Mariel and loaded onto boats. According to a 1981 report, 20.5 percent of thpse who arrived had some sort of criminal record, but that included not only petty criminals and people with histories of violent crime, but also political prisoners and others who were in prison for actions that would not be considered crimes in the United States. Others with mental health problems, as well as persons that the Cuban government considered undesirable, were encouraged to leave. But while the number of people in these categories was high, the vast majority of Mariel entrants [a status that the U.S. government devised for Mariel Cubans and Haitians who arrived at that time] proved not to be that different from their predecessors of the 1960s and 70s.

Some differences did exist: a higher percentage of Mariel entrants were black and mulatto (the established Cuban refugee community was disproportionately white); a large percentage were young, single men, many without families in the United States; and they had lived for 20 years in a different Cuba, a communist Cuba. But in a 1982 study of the Mariel Cubans based

IN THIS ISSUE:

This summer marks the tenth anniversary of the Mariel boatlift, during which more than 125,000 Cubans arrived in the United States. In this issue, Refugee Reports staff writer Hiram A. Ruiz looks at how Mariel Cubans have fared--and finds that, contrary to what many expected, most are adapting well..1

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on "relatively complete social background profiles of the Mariel entrants," Robert L. Bach found that, "As a group, they had a much more positive social background profile than the initial or even continuing reports indicated."

Now, a decade later, it is possible to review the differing fortunes of the Cubans who arrived on the Mariel boatlift.

Old Stereotypes, New Realities Most media attention has focused on about 6,000 Mariel Cubans who are currently in prison (see box). They face possible deportation to Cuba--if Cuba will take them. There are also others who are not in prison but who have not integrated well socially or economically and for whom homelessness, alcohol, drugs, and crime are part of everyday life.

But despite the media focus on those in prison, and the visibility of others who have not adapted well to life in the United States, most Mariel Cubans have essentially followed in the successful footsteps of earlier Cuban refugees. Based on the findings of a recent survey conducted by the Miami Herald and Miami television station WTVJ, although 48% of Mariel Cubans and 50% of pre-Mariel Cubans still believe that the two groups are "very different," the Herald said that the two groups are in fact "surprisingly similar." "Mariel refugees are working, paying taxes, buying houses in the suburbs, [and] taking their children to school in their cars," the paper said.

Few From Either Group Would Return to Cuba The Herald/WTVJ survey found that both groups share equally conservative attitudes about U.S. policies towards Cuba. Only 20% of Mariel and 23% of pre-Mariel Cubans believe that the United States should end its embargo on Cuba. A majority, 85% of Mariel and 75% of pre-Mariel, support TV Marti (U.S. television broadcasts to Cuba). In both groups, the majority also believe that the Republican party best represents the interests of Cuban-Americans, though the level of Republican support--64% among Mariel and 76% among pre-Mariel Cubans--is not as universal as is often thought.

On social issues, however, a large majority in both groups support what are traditionally regarded as liberal positions. For example, 98% of Mariel and 85% of pre-Mariel Cubans support a free national health

THE "EXCLUDABLES"

About 60 Mariel Cubans have never officially set foot in America. They have lived for more than ten years in the U.S. federal prison system, legally excluded from entering the United States because of records of criminality or mental illness in Cuba, awaiting return to a country that doesn't want them.

The 60 excludables who were never released have been joined by others who have committed crimes here. About 2,600 have served their sentences and are being held indefinitely pending deportation. Another 3,500 who are currently serving sentences will continue to be held after serving those terms.

Other nationalities are placed in "exclusion" for shorter periods of time. But, these Mariel Cubans alone are the product of a stalemate between two governments, neither of which has been willing to take responsibility for them.

Legal appeals have been exhausted. One federal judge bluntly said that the U.S. government could "keep them in the Atlanta pen until they die."

On the tenth anniversary of the Mariel boatlift, the Washington Post editorialized, "The constitutionality of this detention has been tested and affirmed by the courts, but the idea of confining people indefinitely after they have completed their sentences is repugnant."

Following prison rioting in 1987, about two-thirds of the detainees were approved for release by INS review panels. But others took the places of those released, and approvals dipped to 25 percent in INS reviews in 1988 and 1989. Justice Department panel reviews of those denied by the INS who were in custody before 1987 have been approved at a rate of 45 percent.

Gary LeShaw, of Atlanta Legal Aid, said, "Imposing prison sentences where state and federal courts have determined that none is warranted, adding time to sentences already served, or worst of all, imprisoning people who were guilty only of mental disorders, flies in the face of what justice and fairness are thought to mean in this country."

plan, while 65% and 62% of the respective groups believe that abortion is a personal decision in which government should not interfere.

Both groups also hold similar views about two other issues regarding the future. Roughly half of those interviewed in each group believe that the United States should not allow another massive arrival of Cuban refugees. Also, a large majority in each group--85% of pre-Mariel and 86% of Mariel Cubans--said thay they plan to stay in the United States permanently, even if there were to be a democratically elected government in Cuba--a development about which both groups are optimistic.

"After All, They've Been Here Ten Years" Lisandro Perez, chair of the Sociology and Anthropology Department at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami, agrees that, overall, Mariel Cubans have integrated fairly well. Nevertheless, some stereotypes persist, and that is ironic, because according to Perez, Mariel Cubans "are the most heterogeneous group of Cubans to arrive in the United States, and it is very difficult to generalize about them."

"If you look at all the Cuban students at FIU [Mariel and pre-Mariel], there are only a few ways you can tell them apart," Perez told Refugee Reports. Those who came via Mariel, Perez said, "speak Spanish better and are likelier to use it more often" than those who were born or grew up in Miami. But according to Perez, Mariel Cubans are generally "not a sepaarate group within the community." "After all, they've been here ten years," he added.

"He's A Marielito, But One of the 'Good Ones'" Miami pianist and music teacher Jesus Garcia, whose Arts Development Center holds concerts and stages *zarzuelas* (Cuban musicals), says that while he finds that the stigma is largely gone, the term "Marielito" still exists, and it means something more than someone who arived in the boatlift. Garcia told Refugee Reports that it is not uncommon to hear people say, "He's a Marielito, but one of the 'good ones,'" or, "Look how well he's done--and he's a Marielito."

When he left Cuba at age 22, Garcia was already an accomplished concert pianist who had performed throughout eastern Europe. When he arrived in the United States, his life changed dramatically. Garcia says that he spent two "horrifying" months at the reception center in Fort Chafee, Arkansas. After a brief stay in Las Vegas, he headed to Miami, "the famous capital of Cuban exile." But in Miami he encountered discrimination and hard times. Garcia found a job as a cleaner and lived in a room in a rundown hotel. Despite the hardships, however, Garcia had no regrets. "Everything in life has a price," he says, "and I was prepared to pay the price to be free."

Garcia's fortunes changed when he won first place, and $1,500, in a piano competition. He was subsequently offered a position with the Miami Beach Symphony. By 1984, Garcia owned a home in Little Havana and had founded his own arts company. Garcia says that he is not unique, that there are many success stories like his. "The common factor," he said, "is not skill, talent, or social background. It is the determination to survive and to succeed."

Working Hard and Getting By Although her success story may not be as dramatic as Garcia's, Ofelia Chun has held a job and, until a recent accident, been self-supporting. But, though she is generally satisfied with her life in the United States, she says that it has not been an easy ten years. "At first it was terrible for me," said Chun, who is Cuban-Chinese, "I didn't know the language and I didn't know my way around." But soon she found work as a housekeeper and became independent. "In this country, people have to become independent," Chun told Refugee Reports.

Chun's experience may be fairly typical of many, if not most, Mariel Cubans. While some have done particularly well, for most success has meant being able to work, support themselves, and gradually enter the socio-economic mainstream. According to the Herald Survey, 25 percent of Mariel Cubans own their own homes (compared to 53 percent of pre-Mariel Cubans) and 29 percent have family incomes above $30,000.

There are also "non-success" stories--those of people who, while not in prison or facing deportation, nevertheless remain marginalized, and not--by most people's definitions--doing well at all here.

Helping the Most Marginal "Gilberto's" is

not a success story. In the ten years he has lived in Washington, D.C., he has been in every hospital in the area, although as he told Refugee Reports, he has only been in jail once--for carrying a concealed weapon. Gilberto has held few jobs, always finding some "church or agency" that would help him. But he's not complaining. "Life is hard here, but it's also easy," Gilberto says. "In Cuba, I had to work or go to jail. Here, if I don't work, nobody cares."

"For a few years, it was very rough," Gilberto said. "I lived on the streets or in shelters." But for the past year he has been receiving disability benefits due to his mental health problems. "Thanks to God, I'm OK now. I have three meals a day, medical attention, and a place to live."

Gilberto is one of the clients in the Mariel Cuban Program at Andromeda Hispano Mental Health Center in Washington D.C. The program offers mental health, employment, and social services to Washington's small but highly marginalized Mariel Cuban population. Many of its clients are among the people who gave rise to the negative Mariel stereotype. Most have mental health problems, many abuse alcohol and drugs, some are homeless, others drift in and out of jail.

The program's clients are a difficult population with whom to work. Fights and arguments are routine. During Refugee Reports' visit, a guard had to be called because of an argument that was heating up into a fight. Frequently, Andromeda staff have confiscated weapons from their clients.

Considering the population the agency serves, Dr. Ricardo Galbis, Andromeda's director, believes the program has been successful. "I think we've done a great deal of good," he told Refugee Reports, "We've helped a number of our clients to reintegrate, despite their problems."

But according to the program's coordinator, Eliana Labarca, helping clients reintegrate is becoming increasingly difficult. Labarca says that in previous years, while most clients had mental health, alcohol, or drug abuse problems, at least some were motivated to put their lives in order. "With help," says Labarca, "they were able to pull themselves together, get--and keep--jobs, and function in the community."

"Some of the clients that remain in the

Miami concert pianist Jesus Garcia, who arrived in the 1980 Mariel boatlift, says that while the Mariel stigma is largely gone, the term "Marielito" is still used, and that it has pejorative connotations. Garcia says that it is not uncommon to hear people say, "Look how well he's done--and he's a Marielito." Photo: USCR/H. Ruiz

program today are those who couldn't, or wouldn't, integrate," says Labarca. Now there is also a new group of clients, young men who were in their their late teens or early twenties when they left Cuba who did not assimilate well in the United States. They are potentially employable, but don't want to work, says Labarca. Some have mental health problems, but won't accept treatment. Alcohol and drugs, particularly crack cocaine, dominate their lives, she says.

Maritza Aragon, director of the Little Havana office of Miami's Christian Community Service Agency, which offers employment training and emergency assistance to entrants and refugees, told Refugee Reports that many of her clients are also people who have had difficulty in building new lives in the United States. A majority of the people her office serves are Mariel Cubans, and most of them are single men in their thirties. "They are the same individuals who did not assimilate ten years ago, and who still have not assimilated," Aragon said.

Looking Forward Many of those with whom Refugee Reports spoke foresee a widening gap between the vast majority of Mariel Cubans who have "made it," and the relatively small minority who haven't.

Those who came with problems and who were not able to join the mainstream are seen as likely to remain marginalized. "Those individuals will probably continue having problems," says Alina Becker of the Cuban American National Council. "Those with mental health problems may need periodic or continuing help from mental health counselors, and those with criminal histories may continue to go in and out of jail," Becker told Refugee Reports.

But the Mariel Cubans who have entered the Cuban-American mainstream are seen as likelier to become even more fully integrated. "The more time that passes," Becker said, "the less distinction we are going to see."

One possible indicator of future directions came from eight-year-old Kenia Duranona, who is a second generation Miami-born Cuban American. Refugee Reports asked Kenia what the word "Marielito" meant to her. "I've never heard it," she said. "I've heard the name Mario, but I've never heard the word 'Marielito'."

Update

° On June 7, Thai Border Patrol police and army units rounded up more than 1,500 Burmese living in the vicinity of Mae Sot and forced them back to Myawaddy, a Burmese-controlled town. A Thai army colonel told journalists on June 6 that another 10,000 Burmese in Tak province would be repatriated soon, and was quoted as saying that the "situation in Burma is favorable for them to go back now."

On May 27, the opposition forces did win elections in Burma, raising the hope that some 40,000 Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand would be able to return. But the new government has not yet been given the reigns of power, and the Burmese military is still reportedly engaged in hostilities in the border region.

° The government of the Philippines has refused to allow 101 Vietnamese boat people aboard a U.S. naval supply ship in Subic Bay to disembark. A U.S. warship carrying another 155 Vietnamese refugees rescued from the South China Sea was scheduled to arrive in the Philippines on June 13, the Washington Post reported.

Philippines officials have announced that they will not allow ships to bring refugees to their shores unless the countries of those same ships can guarantee that the refugees will be resettled elsewhere within six months.

° On May 30, masked Liberian soldiers forced their way into the UN compound in Monrovia, the Liberian capital. After indiscriminately beating many of the civilians sheltered in the compound, the soldiers abducted more than 40, who were later reportedly killed. Several hundred Liberians had sought UN protection, fearing reprisals from government forces because they are of the same ethnic group from which rebel leader John Taylor draws most of his support.

The number of Liberian refugees who have fled the conflict in that country is now estimated at more than 270,000. Some 70,000 refugees are living in Ivory Coast, while more than 200,000 have entered Guinea. Some 180,000 Liberians are also thought to be

displaced within Liberia.

The Liberian refugees in Guinea are in a remote, difficult-to-reach area. Efforts to provide them adequate assistance have been hampered by logistical problems, a tardy international response, and a cumbersome and reportedly not very cooperative government bureaucracy. According to a U.S. health official who recently visited the area, "severe malnutrition could become widespread."

° Fighting broke out on May 12 between Iraqi Kurds in the Mardin refugee camp and Turkish security forces. Shots were fired, some refugees were reportedly beaten, and six refugee leaders were arrested.

Amnesty International issued a statement saying the organization "fears that this incident may be used as a pretext for the immediate refoulement (forced return) to Iraq of the detainees and others in the camp who may have been involved in the skirmishes."

Recent Developments

U.S. CHECKS CZECH REFUGEE PROCESSING, EAST EUROPEAN RESETTLEMENT SUBSIDES

The dramatic changes that swept Eastern Europe in 1989 are now affecting East Europeans seeking asylum in the West. Most recently, the State Department announced the suspension of new interviews for Czechs seeking resettlement as refugees in the United States and imposed limits on Bulgarian and Romanian applicants to those who can show family or other U.S. ties.

The policy shift on Czechs is similar to one announced in November that stopped new interviews for Poles and Hungarians (see Refugee Reports, Vol. X, No. 12).

The State Department announcement said that the shift "reflects the development of greater pluralism and democratization in Czechoslovakia and an assessment that trends will continue in this direction." Sources indicated that the policy would be reviewed following this month's parliamentary elections.

As was the case with the suspension of interviewing of Poles and Hungarians, allowance is made for Czechs who can demonstrate that their lives are in imminent danger (what the State Department calls P-1, or Priority 1, cases, in the six-priority scale used in refugee processing). Although no Czechs will be interviewed who had not registered before April 6, INS officers are permitted to exercise their discretion to offer humanitarian parole in particularly compelling cases where refugee status has been denied.

At the other end of the refugee processing priority scale is P-6, refugees "otherwise of national interest," a catch-all category for refugees without close ties to the United States. When the State Department announced the suspension of new interviews for Poles and Hungarians in November, it also eliminated all interviews for P-6 Poles and Hungarians, including those who had already registered for an interview. According to a State Department source, that decision alone eliminated about 16,000 people from the backlog of East Europeans who had registered for the U.S. refugee resettlement program. The announcement on Czechs does not eliminate interviews for P-6s already registered for them, but eliminates all future interviews for P-2 through P-6. (For a detailed explanation of each of the priority categories, see Refugee Reports, Vol. X, No. 12.)

Bulgarians and Romanians As of May 4, the U.S. government will no longer consider Bulgarians and Romanians in the P-6 category. The State Department announced, however, that Romanian and Bulgarian P-6s who had registered prior to that date would still be interviewed. New applicants who fit the other processing priorities will continue to be interviewed for these two nationalities.

Relatively few Bulgarians have registered for U.S. resettlement. State Department sources suggest that most have few ties to the United States and that Bulgarian Muslims fearing persecution are more likely to cross into Turkey and find permanent refuge there.

Romanians have continued to apply for the U.S. refugee program at a steady pace. Only those Romanians outside their homeland register with voluntary agencies for U.S. resettlement (about 2,400 at the beginning of FY 90 had not yet been interviewed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service). The remainder are part of a long-standing

program, called third-country processing, which operates through the U.S. embassy in Bucharest (see Refugee Reports, Vol. VII, No. 1). In the first seven months of FY 90, the United States accepted 491 Romanians directly from Romania through the third-country processing (TCP) program, and another 1,701 Romanians outside their homeland. The State Department had anticipated shutting down the TCP program by the end of FY 90, but has discovered in the post-Ceausescu era, with eased exit permissions, another 1,000 people still in Romania eligible for admission through the TCP program.

Most of the non-TCP admissions are coming out of Belgrade, since the Yugoslav government has indicated its tolerance for providing first asylum to Romanians depends on quick U.S. processing for those deemed to be refugees by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

East European Processing Program Subsiding In past years, the U.S. refugee admissions program for East Europeans has been characterized by large backlogs and long waits. But, as one State Department source told Refugee Reports, "It's a very different ballgame now." The total "in the pipeline," as of April, was 8,101 (in contrast to 26,897 in the pipeline at the same time last year).

The April 1990 total includes the 6,843 East European applicants who have registered, but who are waiting for their INS interviews, and another 1,258 who have been accepted and are awaiting the final paperwork to allow them to be admitted to the United States. The numbers approved and pending departure have averaged around 1,300 per month for most of this year. The primary cause of delay at this point is medical exams, and what one source called "a general lethargy of the system."

Another factor that changes the ballgame is that INS interviewers are more likely now to reject East European applicants who they determine do not establish a well-founded fear of persecution. From an East European approval rate of 79 percent in FY 87; 66 percent in FY 88; and 72 percent in FY 89, the approval rate has dropped to 47.1 percent in the first seven months of FY 90. The approval rate by nationality shows in clearest terms the changes that are occurring:

Nationality	Approval Rate
Albania	98.6%
Bulgaria	68.5%
Romania	67.2%
Czechoslovakia	34.4%
Poland	17.7%
Hungary	15.5%

With the exception of Romania, a pattern has developed showing higher approval rates for those countries with fewer applicants. For the first seven months of FY 90, 4,052 East Europeans have been admitted to the United States as refugees. By nationality, admissions through April 1990 have been:

Nationality	Number Admitted
Romania	2,129
Poland	1,234
Hungary	251
Czechoslovakia	251
Bulgaria	135
Albania	52

As time goes on, the numbers of applicants, as well as the approval rates, are likely to fall for Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs. In fact, for the last month of the reporting period, April, the approval rate for Czechs had fallen to 6.1 percent and for Poles to 2.7 percent. Also, the number of new registrants coming forward for interviews is tapering down. Most significantly, only 54 Poles and 7 Hungarians were interviewed in April. The largest pool of applicants--764--were Romanians.

The FY 91 budget request indicates that the Administration's ceiling for Eastern Europe will fall by 1,000 numbers, from 6,500 in FY 90 to 5,500. Nearly 9,000 East European refugees were admitted to the United States in FY 89.

Effect on Western Europe Changes in U.S. admissions policies are having a direct impact on the status of East Europeans in Western Europe. The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) has informed the U.S. government that East Europeans who had already been in West Germany for a year, as of April 14, 1989, and had not been interviewed by the INS, would not be allowed to remain in the FRG. East Europeans arriving after that date will only be permitted to stay for one year "provided that confirmation is received that the application has a realistic chance

of being approved."

For Poles and Hungarians, the time period shrinks to three months. "In practice," said the FRG communication to the State Department, "the regulation limiting stay of Polish and Hungarian asylum seekers to three months when pursuing applications for U.S. asylum/refugee status will hardly be used because, in accordance with the new regulations of the U.S. government, no further refugee applications from Poles and Hungarians will be accepted after November 22, 1989."

AMENDMENT INTRODUCED TO EXTEND LOWER REFUGEE THRESHOLD FOR SOVIET JEWS, EVANGELICALS, AND OTHER CATEGORY GROUPS

Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-N.J.) and Rep. Bruce A. Morrison (D-Conn.) introduced legislation on May 23 to extend for two years the Lautenberg-Morrison Amendment, which makes it easier for Soviet Jews, Evangelical Christians, Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainians, as well as certain categories of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians, to enter the United States as refugees.

The bills, S. 2677 and H.R. 4899, establish a lower standard for refugee admission for members of these categories--"a credible basis for concern" about the possibility of persecution, as opposed to the "well-founded fear of persecution" standard that defines refugees in the Refugee Act of 1980.

Legislation establishing the lowered threshold for these category groups unanimously passed the Senate last year and became law as part of the FY 90 Foreign Aid Appropriations Act (see Refugee Reports, Vol. X, Nos. 4, 7, and 9). Because the amendment to that law sunsets on October 1, 1990, the new bill was introduced to extend the relaxed standard for these groups until October 1, 1992.

"We continue to need this liberalized standard," said Lautenberg, "because conditions for the persecuted groups in the Soviet Union and Southeast Asia have not significantly improved." Lautenberg said that "the conditions that caused them to seek refuge last year still exist, and in some cases, have worsened." (See Resources.)

Lautenberg added, "If this law expires at the end of this fiscal year, denial rates for Soviet Jews would go up to about 40 percent."

A General Accounting Office (GAO) report on the implementation of the Lautenberg-Morrison Amendment, issued on May 8, found that almost 78 percent of category applicants interviewed in Moscow and 99 percent of those interviewed in Rome were approved for refugee status in FY 90 prior to the implementation of Lautenberg-Morrison. During February, after the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) began implementing the Amendment, INS officers approved 90 percent of applicants in Moscow and 99 percent of those in Rome.

The INS is also applying Lautenberg-Morrison retroactively to all category applicants denied refugee status since August 1988.

Moscow Processing About 45,000 of the 50,000 FY 90 Soviet admissions are being processed out of Rome, where the approval rate has been 99 percent. These are mostly all Soviet Jews. However, Rome processing is due to end by the close of this month. Thereafter all processing will be directly from Moscow.

State Department officials estimate that about 800,000 Soviets will receive U.S. refugee applications in FY 90.

The GAO report cited State Department officials as preferring Moscow processing because it "enables the United States to establish Soviet admission ceilings based on U.S. foreign policy and budgetary considerations, rather than on the number of people the Soviet Union allows to emigrate."

Priority is assigned to those with relatives or other ties to the United States (80 percent of monthly interviews go to applicants falling in priority categories P1-P5--see Refugee Reports, Vol. IX, No. 12 for a detailed breakdown of each of the priority categories).

About 70 percent of the Soviet applicants lack any ties to the United States, however. They are part of the pool that comprises the remaining 20 percent of the interview places. Priority is assigned to members of the religious category groups with distant relatives in the United States or to Soviet Jews experiencing hardships. "Other P-6 Soviets, who have submitted preliminary questionnaires for refugee consideration in FY 90 may never be inter-

viewed," said the GAO report. As of mid-January 1990, 2,100 P-6 refugees without U.S. ties had been approved by the INS in Moscow.

Although processing a refugee out of Moscow was found to be much cheaper than Rome (less than half the cost per refugee), direct departures out of the USSR present other problems. The Moscow Embassy refugee processing unit has been "chronically understaffed," said the GAO, and "nearly all non-INS refugee processing staff will depart by August 1990." The report said that there had been no scheduled replacements for the INS staff that would be departing. The report also pointed out that two of the six interview rooms were unsatisfactory because they did not provide adequate privacy during the interviews.

No New Soviet Emigration Law A major problem remains the failure of the Soviet Union to enact legislation liberalizing its emigration policies. Such a law had been widely expected prior to the Bush-Gorbachev summit meeting, but was withdrawn by the Kremlin at the last minute. The Supreme Soviet again postponed the emigration bill on June 5, following the summit, where President Bush had clearly linked ratification of the U.S.-Soviet trade agreement to final passage of the bill. The bill would give every Soviet citizen the right to hold a passport and travel freely for five years.

Little explanation was given for the delay, though some speculated that it could be due to Soviet concerns, expressed by Gorbachev, about settlement of Soviet Jews in the occupied territories. Israeli Prime Minister Shamir has insisted that Soviet Jews have the right to settle anywhere in "Eretz Israel," the Biblical Land of Israel encompassing the territories extending to the Jordan River. An official of the Jewish Agency said that only 285 of the 49,000 Soviet arrivals since April 1989 had settled in the occupied territories.

As it now stands, exit permission is officially limited to Jews going to Israel or to others with letters of invitation from close relatives abroad. A U.S. Embassy official told the GAO that some Soviet denials of exit permission had been reported among the 2,100 Soviets accepted as refugees by the United States without U.S. family ties.

FY 90 BUDGET SUPPLEMENTAL SIGNED INTO LAW

A $4.4 billion FY 90 budget supplemental bill signed into law on May 25, which provides $720 million in economic aid requested by President Bush for Panama and Nicaragua, includes $100 million for refugee resettlement and assistance.

Of the refugee money, $70 million will provide federal funding for admission of 27,000 refugees, primarily from the Soviet Union. An additional $5 million will go to resettle Soviet and Eastern European Jews in Israel. The remaining $25 million will be available for the State Department to spend on refugee assistance overseas.

Other refugee-related funds in the new law (PL 101-302) provide for the repatriation of Nicaraguan contras and their families, housing loans for Soviet Jews in Israel, humanitarian aid to Cambodian and Romanian children, and targeted assistance for Dade County, Florida, and other communities.

$70 Million Provides Federal Funds for 27,000 Admissions When the State Department submitted its initial FY 90 budget request in January 1989, it sought funding for the admission of an estimated 84,000 refugees worldwide. Following consultations with Congress in September, the President established an overall refugee admissions ceiling of 125,000, of which 111,000 were to be federally funded and 14,000 were to be resettled with private sector funding.

The FY 90 budget, however, provided federal funding for only the 84,000 refugee numbers in the original Administration estimate, leaving a substantial shortfall in the admissions budget.

In February 1990, the Administration requested that Congress approve a refugee budget supplemental of $70 million. "The largest portion of this request," said Ambassador Princeton Lyman, director of the State Department's Bureau for Refugee Programs, "covers the increase in the number of funded Soviet admissions from 16,000 to 40,000 and the increase in care and maintenance costs for the entire caseload."

The FY 90 admissions ceiling for the Soviet Union totals 50,000, which includes 10,000 unfunded numbers.

An estimated $38 million of the refugee

admissions supplemental will pay for the processing, as well as care and maintenance costs, of the remaining Soviet refugees in the Rome and Vienna pipeline.

Another $14 million will finance transportation costs, and $18 million will cover reception and placement grants to U.S. voluntary agencies to resettle the 27,000 refugees. In addition to the 24,000 Soviet refugees, 2,000 Vietnamese Amerasians and 1,000 African refugees will enter the United States in FY 90 with full federal funding as a result of the supplemental.

Additional Funded Refugee Admissions Places Found for Soviets As a result of an amendment to the supplemental and a State Department reallocation of regional admissions numbers, additional numbers of Soviet refugees will be able to enter the United States with full federal funding this year.

In an amendment sponsored by Sen. William L. Armstrong (R-Colo.), an "equitable share" of the new admissions funding "shall be made available to Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and Baptists to fund the existing 2,000 semifunded refugee admissions numbers for the Soviet Union."

Of the 10,000 originally unfunded numbers in the Soviet ceiling, the State Department allocated 8,000 for Soviet Jewish admissions and 2,000 for Christian minorities. According to State Department figures, a total of 42,985 Soviet refugees had entered the United States as of April 30, of whom about 80 percent were Soviet Jews, 17 percent were Protestant minorities, and the rest were Ukrainians, Armenians, and others.

The Armstrong amendment also states that the supplemental funds would not need to be tapped if "sufficient unused refugee admissions numbers could be reallocated within this fiscal year to allow adequate funding and admission of this group."

In fact, on May 18, the State Department transferred 1,500 numbers from the FY 90 admissions ceiling for the Near East/South Asia region, which was initially set at 6,500, to the Soviet Union. A State Department official told Refugee Reports that these numbers would be used principally to maintain movements out of Moscow, and could be used to process Soviet Jews, Protestant minorities, or anyone else in the pipeline. As to whether the funded numbers available through the reallocation would overlap or be added to the funded numbers designated by the Armstrong amendment for Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and Baptists, the official said, "We are still reviewing what to do about this."

The reallocation met with some criticism from Congress and private voluntary agencies. "We do not object to the provision of 1,500 additional refugee numbers to the Soviet Union," said Reps. Jack Brooks (D-Tex.) and Bruce A. Morrison (D-Conn.) in a letter to Jewel Lafontant, U.S. coordinator for refugee affairs. But, they added, "We do not believe that notification that takes place right before the time proposed for implementation constitutes appropriate consultation under the Refugee Act."

They said that the Administration's letter notifying them of the proposed reallocation reached them on May 14. The transfer took effect four days later.

"We believe that such consultations require face-to-face, Cabinet-level consultations even when the worldwide refugee ceiling is not increased," the letter said.

Brooks is chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and Morrison is chairman of the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law.

"This is not a time to reduce available admissions numbers" from the Near East/South Asia region, said Ross Vartian, chairman of the Armenian Refugee Coordinating Committee. He noted that, as of April 30, 3,264 refugees had been admitted from the region in FY 90, and there were "more than 3,100 persons in the Near East/South Asia pipeline, of which more than 1,700 are already approved and awaiting departure."

There is, said Vartian, a "continuing and undiminished need for admissions numbers for refugees from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and other nations in the region."

ERMA Fund Bolstered by $25 Million Although the Administration did not request additional funding for refugee assistance overseas, Congress added $25 million to the State Department's Emergency Refugee Migration and Assistance (ERMA) fund. A number of voluntary agencies and advocacy groups, including the U.S. Committee for Refugees, had called for an increase of $50 million in refugee assistance, in light of the financial crisis faced by the UN High

REFUGEE-RELATED PROVISIONS IN THE FY 90 BUDGET SUPPLEMENTAL

Following are the refugee-related provisions in the $4.4 billion supplemental appropriations bill, P.L. 101-302, which was enacted on May 25.

° **Resettlement**: $75,000,000 for Migration and Refugee Assistance to support emergency refugee admissions and assistance.

Of this amount, "not less than $5,000,000 shall be available for Soviet, Eastern European and other refugees resettling in Israel." The remaining $70,000,000 will provide for the admission to the United States of 24,000 Soviet refugees, 2,000 Vietnamese Amerasians, and 1,000 Africans, all previously unfunded numbers in the FY 90 worldwide admissions ceiling of 111,000.

Of the funds allocated in this account, "an equitable share shall be made available to Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and Baptists to fund the existing 2,000 semifunded refugee admissions numbers for the Soviet Union, unless sufficient unused refugee admission numbers could be reallocated within this fiscal year to allow adequate funding and admission of this group."

° **Overseas Assistance**: $25,000,000 will be available for the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) Fund to provide additional funds for overseas refugee assistance programs.

° **Housing in Israel**: $400,000,000 will be available in housing loans "for the purpose of providing housing and infrastructure in Israel for Soviet refugees."

° **Repatriation of Contras**: $30,000,000 will be available for "assistance to support the voluntary demobilization, repatriation and resettlement of members of the Nicaraguan resistance and their families." This assistance will only be available to members of the resistance who are abiding by the terms of a regional cease-fire agreement.

° **Aid to Cambodian Children**: "Up to $5,000,000...may be made available to the President to provide emergency assistance through international relief agencies to children within Cambodia." None of the funds "may be made available, directly or indirectly, for the Khmer Rouge."

° **Aid to Romanian Children**: "Not less than $4,000,000...shall be made available... through international relief agencies and nongovernmental organizations for health assistance for children in Romania." According to the conference report on the bill, "funds are urgently needed to address the acute shortage of basic medical supplies and substandard conditions under which many children, particularly orphans, are forced to live. To the extent feasible, these funds should be used to move children out of institutional care either through family reunification or adoption."

° **Aid to Burmese in Thailand**: Provisions for the distribution of $250,000 in humanitarian aid that was previously allocated for Burmese students at camps on the border with Thailand have been redrafted to provide assistance "to any Burmese person in Burma or Thailand who is displaced as a result of events relating to civil conflict."

° **Targeted Assistance**: $6,000,000 will be transferred from student financial aid programs to the Office of Refugee Resettlement for the targeted assistance program. $5,000,000 will go to Dade County in Florida; $500,000 for communities conducting "Fish/Wilson" demonstration projects that also have been heavily impacted by the recent influx of Soviet Pentecostals for health and employment services; and $500,000 for schools where enrollment of Indochinese students "is greater than 2,000, and who comprise no less than 20 percent of the overall school enrollment in such locality with a general population of no less than 75,000 persons."

Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian organizations (see Refugee Reports, Vol. XI, Nos. 2 and 4).

In the FY 90 refugee budget bill passed last November, Congress had appropriated $50 million for the ERMA fund. Since then, the State Department has drawn down $24.9 million in March for refugee programs in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, and another $7 million in May for the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees.

The supplemental appropriation brings the ERMA fund back up to about $43 million. A State Department official said it was "very likely" that more ERMA funds would be spent before the end of the fiscal year, but declined to give specifics.

$5 Million for Cambodian Children Criticized by the Administration A joint House-Senate conference committee on the budget supplemental approved an amendment to provide $5 million in emergency assistance "through international relief agencies to children in Cambodia" with a stipulation that "none of the funds...may be made available, directly or indirectly, for the Khmer Rouge."

"I do not profess to be an expert on Cambodia," said Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-Neb.), one of the amendment's co-sponsors and a recent visitor to Cambodia, "but several things stand out clearly. One is that there are thousands of children in great need of basic medical care, shelter, clothing, and similar necessities of life. Another is that there is a group of nongovernmental organizations, some from the United States, some from other countries, working in Cambodia to help people at the most basic level.... These relief organizations know the situation in Cambodia and the people. They can put to very good use the funds provided by this amendment."

The State Department had opposed the amendment, citing a ban on U.S. government aid to Cambodia. "We would have preferred that the amendment include language... helping all Cambodian children in need, including those languishing in displaced persons camps in Thailand," a State Department spokesman said. As written, the amendment was "implying recognition of the Phnom Penh regime," said the spokesman.

Amendment co-sponsor Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Cal.) accused the Administration of a "lack of morality" for siding with a non-communist resistance who work in coalition with the Khmer Rouge to overthrow the Vietnamese-backed government in Phnom Penh. "Let us today," Cranston said in offering the amendment, "separate the 'realpolitik' of our policy from the real people of Cambodia. In our political dispute with the Phnom Penh government, let us not punish the people. They have suffered enough."

Dawn Calabia, assistant director for refugees of the U.S. Catholic Conference/ Migration and Refugee Service, told Refugee Reports, "We favor humanitarian aid in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. I find it difficult to see how people can oppose assistance to children or anybody else in need." She cautioned that the amendment appeared to have been watered down, probably as a compromise: "It says 'up to $5 million' rather than 'not less than $5 million,' and 'may be made available' rather than 'shall' be made available.'"

Given the Administration's opposition to the amendment, Calabia said, "they could spend a dollar and say they are in compliance." The conference report accompanying the bill requires the State Department and the Agency for International Development to report to the Appropriations Committees on July 15, 1990 and October 15, 1990 on implementation of the provision.

New Flexibility for Aid to Burmese Refugees When the FY 90 refugee budget was passed late last year, it included an earmark of $250,000 in humanitarian assistance for "Burmese students at or near the Thai border" who had fled there to escape a crackdown by the Burmese army against pro-democracy activists. But army attacks in 1990 sent the students scattering into Thailand, along with about 16,000 ethnic minority refugees.

Burmese asylum seekers in Thailand now number more than 40,000, including about 2,000 students in Bangkok. But the BRP's legal counsel argued that the language of the Congressional earmark precluded the provision of aid to students away from the border, or to ethnic minority groups anywhere.

Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-N.Y.), the sponsor of the original earmark, introduced

an amendment establishing new guidelines for the provision of aid "to any Burmese person in Burma or Thailand who is displaced as a result of events relating to civil conflict."

The conference report noted that House and Senate conferees on the supplemental bill agreed both with the original provision and the additional flexibility provided by the new amendment but "are not prepared to agree quickly to long-term or substantially increased bilateral funding of any Burmese person displaced in either Burma or Thailand. The conferees believe that an internationally organized multilateral program to assist such persons, restricted to discrete geographic areas, is the most appropriate approach to dealing with this problem."

The internationally organized, multilateral program for displaced Burmese that is preferred by the conferees may be unnecessary, or it may be impossible. On May 27, the pro-democratic opposition party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won a landslide victory over the party of the ruling military junta, the National Unity Party (NUP), in an election marked by widespread intimidation and arrest of opposition supporters but apparently free balloting.

If the NUP transfers power to the new civilian government promptly and peacefully, it could pave the way for the safe repatriation of the Burmese in Thailand. If the military delays or subverts such a transfer, and many Burmese have voiced deep skepticism of the army's intentions, thousands of Burmese will remain trapped in Thailand. And the Thai government, so far, has shown little interest in a multilateral, international aid program for Burmese students and ethnic minority groups.

$6 Million for Targeted Assistance in Florida, Oregon, and Massachusetts In last year's budget supplemental, the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) did not request and was not allocated any additional funding for domestic resettlement services, despite a mid-year increase in the worldwide admissions ceiling from 94,000 to 116,500.

This year, again, ORR did not request any additional resettlement funds. Congress, however, added $6 million for the ORR targeted assistance program by transferring unused funds from a student financial aid program.

Although no states were named in the supplemental bill, an ORR source told Refugee Reports that the funds are intended for three states: Florida, Oregon, and Massachusetts.

The bulk of the new targeted assistance money, $5 million, will go to public schools and Jackson Memorial Hospital in Florida's Dade County to assist Cuban and Haitian entrants who entered the United States in the 1980 Mariel boatlift. Another $500,000 will assist "communities currently conducting a 'Fish/Wilson' demonstration project and which have been heavily impacted by the recent influx of Soviet Pentecostals for health and employment services." The only community that meets these criteria is Oregon, said the ORR source.

The remaining $500,000 in supplemental funds for targeted assistance is designated for schools "in which the enrollment of Indochinese students (including secondary migrants) is greater than 2,000, and who comprise no less than 20 percent of the overall school enrollment in such a locality with a general population of no less than 75,000 persons." The public schools in Lowell, Massachusetts appear to meet these criteria, according to the ORR source.

Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) noted that "HHS has not come forward to request supplemental funds despite our urging them to do so last year." He said this was "placing great strains on many States" in FY 90.

"I am disappointed by the failure of HHS and OMB to request supplemental funds for domestic refugee programs," said Sen. Pete Wilson (R-Cal.), who represents the state that has resettled the most refugees. "We must remember that refugee policy does not end with the actual processing and admissions into the United States. That is only the beginning as the long resettlement process begins."

"Most, if not all, refugees, enter the United States with minimal English skills, competitive job training, or education," said Wilson. "Without the training and services these programs provide, there is, in all likelihood, little hope that these individuals can become productive members of society, which is truly unfortunate given the tragedies and persecution these people have already endured and from which they have escaped."

Resources

TWO REPORTS ON SOVIET ANTISEMITISM

The background to the reintroduction of the Lautenberg-Morrison Amendment (see Recent Developments) is the historical pattern of antisemitism in the Soviet Union, combined with the resurgence of anti-Jewish expressions as centralized power declines and nationality sentiments rise.

Unlike past Russian history, where the government fomented pogroms and other forms of Jewish persecution, today Soviet Jews perceive antisemitic excesses coming "from below," from extreme nationalist groups, such as Pamyat, who engage in public, blatant antisemitic agitation that Zvi Gitelman, author of "Antisemitism in the Age of Perestroika," says would not have been tolerated before Glasnost.

He says that Soviet Jews feel "politically impotent and hence vulnerable." The weakness of the central government is a cause for great uncertainty. "Where once Jews feared the power of the government, today they are frightened by its weakness," Gitelman says. "It may have neither the will nor the ability to intervene effectively against antisemitic attacks."

Gitelman notes a number of areas where Jewish life has improved as a result of Gorbachev-era reforms. Access to religious books has been made easier and Jewish theological seminaries have been established in Moscow and Leningrad. Jewish cultural organizations freely publish and distribute their magazines and newsletters. He writes, "From a Western perspective, the behavior of Soviet Jews today could be seen as irrational and hysterical. After all, very few Jews have been killed in the ethnic violence of the past two years, some Jews seem to have attained prominence in the Soviet intelligentsia, and, besides, those who are truly frightened can leave."

But Gitelman says that Soviet Jewish perspectives are different from Western outlooks, "because they have been molded in a specific historical context and very different circumstances from that of American Jewry."

The author recounts centuries-old antisemitism from Russia and the other Soviet republics, and notes, "there is much historical evidence that antisemitism is deeply rooted in some segments of Soviet society.

Gitelman interviewed 1,161 ex-Soviet citizens who had left the USSR between 1977 and 1980 and found that 74 percent from the Russian republic (the RSFSR) had personally experienced antisemitism often or sometimes. Encounters with antisemitism were less for Jews from Georgia and Central Asia.

Looking at the attitudes of contemporary Muscovites, Gitelman cites a recent survey in the Moscow region in which 18 percent of the respondents said they disliked Jews, an equal amount said they liked them, and 65 percent said they were neutral. Nearly equal proportions thought that "most people in the Soviet Union are anti-Jewish" and that "very few people are anti-Jewish." Over 90 percent thought Jews should have the right to emigrate or choose to stay in the USSR and 88 percent favored equal employment opportunities for Jews."

"Though these results--which may not be generalizable to the country as a whole--indicate higher levels of antisemitism than what most surveys find in the United States, they do not indicate widespread and intense anti-Jewish feelings which would lead to pogroms," says Gitelman. The author also points to March 1990 elections in local soviets in which candidates associated with extremist nationalism and antisemitism were "soundly trounced" in Moscow, Leningrad and other areas.

Yet, Gitelman finds, "Antisemitism is more visible and blatant today in the USSR than it has been in the last forty years."

Another report, "The United States and Soviet Jews: Refugee Policy and Acculturation," by Gary Rubin of the American Jewish Committee, asserts that "Soviet Jews are indeed in great danger." Like Gitelman, Rubin also notes the history of Russian antisemitism, and more recent expressions of it in the Gorbachev era. Rubin, however, looks not at antisemitism per se, but rather in terms of the admission of Soviet Jews to the United States as refugees.

He looks at the definition of refugees, as persons with "well-founded fears of persecution," and says that this means we must turn attention to "the subjective inner concerns of Soviet Jews themselves." He reports that Soviet Jews "are worried about

their plight" and "anxious to get out of the country."

Rubin cites the same survey of attitudes towards Jews in Moscow as did Gitelman, and arrives at an alarming conclusion. "These data prove conclusively," says Rubin, "that Jews have well-founded reasons to fear for their safety in today's Soviet Union."

Among other things, he recommends that the United States maintain pressure for Soviet Jewish refugee admissions to the United States at "at least the current levels," and that the Lautenberg-Morrison Amendment be extended.

Limited copies of "Antisemitism in the Age of Perestroika" are available free of charge from the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). To order, call or write Alma Thomas, HIAS, 200 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10003-1572. (212) 886-9446.

"The United States and Soviet Jews" is available for $5 from the American Jewish Committee, Institute of Human Relations, 165 East 56th St., New York, NY 10022-2746.

U.S. CULTURAL ORIENTATION BOOKS TRANSLATED INTO PERSIAN AND ARMENIAN LANGUAGES

Newly arrived speakers of Persian and Armenian will have their cultural orientation to American life eased somewhat with the availability of two translations of works previously available in English.

America: A Nation of Immigrants is a Persian-language companion volume to Iranian Refugees in America: A Cross-Cultural Perspective (see Refugee Reports, Vol. VIII, No. 10), published by the U.S. Baha'i Refugee Office. The booklet attempts to shed light on those aspects of American life that Iranian readers would be most likely to find hard to understand.

"Facts of Life in the United States: Information for Refugees Who Come to the United States," a publication of Migration and Refugee Services of the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has been translated into Armenian by the Armenian Assembly of America. Translated into both Eastern and Western Armenian, the booklet would be useful for Armenians coming either from the Soviet Union or from Iran and other Middle Eastern countries.

"Facts of Life" can be ordered for $1.50 from Publications, Migration and Refugee Services, U.S. Catholic Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC. 20005. Bulk copies are available at reduced rates.

America is available for $2 from Baha'i Distribution Service, 415 Linden Ave., Wilmette, IL 50091. (800) 999-9019.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF WORKING GROUP ON VIETNAMESE FORMER RE-ED DETAINEES AVAILABLE

The final report of a working group convened on behalf of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) by the Refugee Policy Group (RPG) on the needs of former re-education camp detainees from Vietnam is now available. The group held two consultative meetings on January 16-17 and February 13-14, 1990 (see Refugee Reports, Vol. XI, No. 2).

The report, "Consultation on the Resettlement of Former Re-Education Camp Detainees from Vietnam: Summary and Recommendations," includes recommendations on service needs in the areas of cultural orientation, health, language training, and vocational training, and employment. For information, contact Refugee Policy Group, 1424 16th Street NW, Suite 401, Washington, DC 20036. (202) 387-3015.

USCR REPORT ON BURMESE REFUGEES AVAILABLE

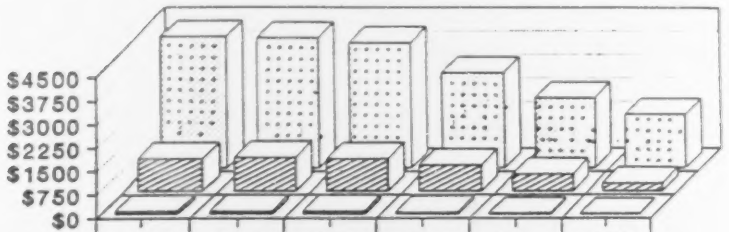
A report on the crisis facing some 40,000 Burmese refugees in Thailand is now available from the U.S. Committee for Refugees. The report, based on site visits to the Thai/Burma border in 1989 and 1990 by USCR policy analyst Court Robinson, notes that, although the defeat of the repressive military government in the May elections holds out some hope for the eventual return home of Burmese refugees, they still face real danger (see Recent Developments, Update).

The USCR report calls upon Thailand to declare a moratorium on the forced repatriation of Burmese asylum seekers--students, ethnic minorities, or others with a well-founded fear of persecution--and instead provide them temporary asylum.

Refugee Reports subscribers receive a free copy of the report. Send $3 for each additional copy to USCR at 1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 920, Washington, DC 20005.

U.S. REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Federal Dollars Per Refugee Arrival



	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
CMA*	$4203	$4150	$4008	$3044	$2247	$1731
Social Services	$1058	$1099	$1061	$857	$557	$258
Public Health	$118	$128	$124	$76	$50	$26

Public Health Social Services CMA*

Based on 68,045 Arrivals in 1985; 62,440 in 1986; 64,843 in 1987; 76,622 in 1988; 116,600 in 1989; & 125,000 '90.

* Cash and Medical Assistance

Source: Office of Refugee Resettlement, Department of Health and Human Services Chicago Regional Office--March 1990

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